

## Blue Springs, Missouri Joins the First Lady's Let's Move! Initiative

Posted by Judy Baker, Regional Director for Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri on March 16, 2011

At the request of Mayor Carson Ross, the Blue Springs, Missouri City Council unanimously passed a resolution of commitment on March 7 supporting the *Let's Move!* initiative. Blue Springs will tackle preventing childhood obesity from multiple angles, focusing on involvement of diverse segments in the community, collaboration, and measurable results. Many community partners, such as the school district, local hospital, YMCA, and the fire department have signed letters of commitment to the initiative.

A citizen-driven organization called StandUp Blue Springs, that has facilitated visioning and community involvement in the past, will take the lead on implementation, and facilitate four citizen-driven community summits designed to identify ideas, develop action plans and begin implementing specific steps to achieve the *Let's Move!* objectives.



Attendees of the council meeting held on March 7th, including Regional Director Judy Baker and Mayor Carson Ross.

The City of Blue Springs will hold *Let's Move!* Blue Springs Week on March 25 with the "March with the Mayor." Mayor Ross will lead area school children, community leaders and citizens on this one-mile lunch hour walk through downtown Blue Springs to promote the positive results of better health, and to keep the community on the march toward being more physically active. Kansas City Chiefs mascot, KC Wolf, will be at the March with the Mayor to cheer on the walkers and to emphasize the partnership between the *Let's Move!* Campaign and the NFL Play 60.

*Let's Move!* Blue Springs will also work on improving nutrition in schools and helping to make healthy foods more affordable and accessible. This will include increasing access to healthy foods in collaboration with the school district to increase healthy choices (including those in vending machines), a robust food back-pack program supported by the faith community to provide healthy weekend meals for students who might not have such access, the development of community gardens, and an expanded farmers market to provide access to freshly-grown food.

As part of *Let's Move!* Blue Springs, the grocery stores and other food purveyors are at the planning table to help increase access to recipes using healthy foods and ensure a balance of healthy foods included in weekly advertisements. The school district's culinary program is also being engaged to help develop healthy menus using commonly available foods and to help educate peers and their parents on how to eat in a more healthy manner.